THANK you for inviting me to be with you. It is an honor to take part in the Golden Jubilee Program of your Society. It is a pleasure to have this opportunity to meet again with so many of my friends.

An anniversary meeting such as this offers many opportunities.

For all of us, this can be a time of reflection...a time to look back over a half-century of achievement to see how far we have come...a time to pay our respects to the stalwart men and women who have brought us so far.

Such an occasion also can be a time for setting our sights on the goals of the future, a time to take inspiration from such giants of agronomy as Orton, Bolley, East, and Shull for the important jobs ahead.

Many challenges lie ahead in the new frontiers of agriculture.

We are depending upon research to help meet these challenges.

Research offers us much as a way to expand agriculture’s frontiers. It will contribute most if our support is adequate and our direction, wise. These are the reasons that the department subscribes to a policy of broad and balanced research: Broad, because it is concerned with both the problems of the day and the future—problems that will yield most readily to a combination of basic and applied research. And balanced because solutions to major problems will come only when research concerns itself with the total job—the production, utilization, marketing, and consumption of farm commodities.

All told, it is a tremendous scientific challenge.

But the end result—important progress toward balancing production with markets—warrants an outstanding effort.

Agriculture’s number one problem today is surpluses. For that reason, I would like to report to you on a market development trip from which I have just returned.

This is a trip I have wanted to make for over a year. The Department has a world-wide foreign agricultural service, and I wanted to see our agricultural attaches at work in their assigned countries. More than that I wanted I visited 12 countries in just over 3 weeks. Time in each country was limited, I came back with clear impressions and conclusions.

The outstanding conclusion of my trip is that benefits have been derived by the United States agriculture in particular, and the countries from our surplus disposal programs. The rice, edible oils, dairy products, feed grains, and other products we have exported under these programs have on the one hand helped take the pressure off our farmers’ domestic market, and have saved the American tax payer the cost of continued storage and handling costs.

These programs have put food and fiber of people who need them. My talks with the officials and political leaders of the countries convinced me that we have not only provided material help but in doing so have built up a reservoir of goodwill.

Throughout our trip my staff and I have found that our primary concern is to expand our exports of United States farm products, utilizing ingenuity of our private traders and enterprise. In the history of human civilization there was found a better or more efficient way of meeting needs of mankind than through commercial markets.

It is the system that has made the United States great. This system based on free enterprise—freedom must be preserved and strengthened. We need to sell for cash and I am gratified that our cash sales increased very substantially last year.

In our cash sales efforts we also have a credit program which up to 3 years credit can be extended to purchase of our surplus commodities. This helps temporary financial difficulties to obtain the need when they need them. There is also a program which makes it possible for us to buy perishable farm products for minerals and materials that can be stored indefinitely.

We also emphasized and explained the decade-long conservation of the crown jewels of our agricultural heritage. These are the things that can be carried forward. We need concern ourselves with these to carry on the work of the past...the conservation of our genetic resources to carry on the work of future generations.

I am gratified to see that agriculture is giving attention to these conservation needs. But there is a great deal more that we can do.

I am convinced that our country can produce all it needs. It is only a question of when we can produce it and how.

Agronomy is the science of expanding the productivity of the land and the knowledge of the problems of agriculture. It offers a way of expanding agriculture’s frontiers.

We are depending upon research to help meet these challenges.

All told, it is a tremendous scientific challenge.